

Familiar Bluet *Enallagma civile*

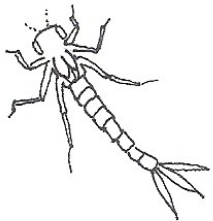


Male

These fragile blue damselflies with black stripes are found near still water. When you see the small, slender body and slow flight, you'll know right away that this is a damselfly and not a dragonfly. They snatch insects off the surface of plants while flying. This damselfly is a member of the pond damselfly family. The female lays her eggs inside the stems of water plants.

Cool fact: Many pond damselflies are named after their bright colors. Most damselflies in the U.S. belong to this group.

Other names: "Civil Bluet"



Nymph

- Found in ponds
- Looks long and slim overall
- 3 long leaf-like structures at tip of abdomen (gills)
- Green in color



Your Local Five: A Dragonfly Guide

*An Introduction to Five Common
Odonates of Southeastern North Carolina*



Halyburton Park and the Cape Fear Audubon Society
Funded by the Landfall Foundation

Eastern Pondhawk *Erythemis simplicicollis*



Male

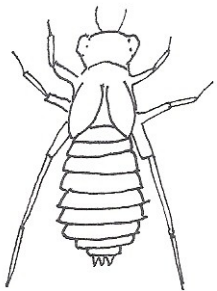


Female

Like a hawk, these dragonflies are fierce predators. The blue (male) and green (female) pondhawks feed on anything they can catch. Adults are usually found near water, while the young feed farther away—for good reason! These ferocious feeders will happily eat each other. Males also have circling contests; one will fly under another, coming up right in front of him. The second will repeat this maneuver so it looks as if they are turning cartwheels. Pondhawks like to perch low on plants or on the ground. The female dips her abdomen into the water of clean ponds to lay her eggs.

Cool fact: They will often follow people walking to catch the insects disturbed by their footsteps.

Other names: “Common Pondhawk” for its abundance at ponds
“Green Jacket” for the bright green color of the juvenile male and adult female



Nymph

- Found in ponds and lakes, especially ones without fish
- Wide, flat abdomen, round at end
- Green in color

Carolina Saddlebags *Tramea carolina*

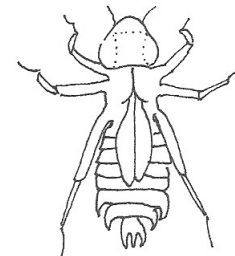


Male

The Carolina Saddlebags is easily recognized by the large brown or red patches on their back wings. These look like the saddlebags on a horse or motorcycle. Males have bright red abdomens. Females are similar in color but duller. They are usually seen in flight, looking like tiny gliders, but also perch on the tips of sticks with their abdomens pointed down. Females dip their abdomen in water to lay eggs. They are members of the Skimmer family and migrate along our coast.

Cool fact: Saddlebags are called Dancing Gliders because the male hovers over the female while she lays her eggs and reattaches to the male between bouts of egg-laying.

Other names: “Violet-masked Glider” for its violet colored face.



Nymph

- Found in ponds and lakes
- Wide abdomen with 5 short tail-like structures at the tip.
- Triangular shaped head
- Green in color

Common Green Darner *Anax junius*



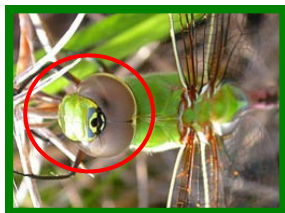
Male and female in tandem.



Female

The Common Green Darner is one of the largest, most aggressive dragonflies in our area. They eat mostly insects, including other dragonflies, but can even capture and eat hummingbirds! The bright green and blue colors of the male are easy to spot flying at eye level or higher from spring into fall. The females, green and brown, are often seen in tandem or in the wheel position. The female lays her eggs inside plant stems or logs, with the male attached in tandem. They are found around still waters and feeding over fields. Many migrate along the coast in fall.

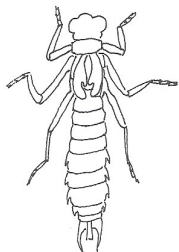
If you're lucky enough to get close, you'll see a bull's eye pattern on their forehead.



Cool fact: The Pokemon Yanmega is based on the darner family of dragonflies.

Other names: "Darning Needle" for its speed
"Mosquito Hawk" for its predatory habits

Nymph

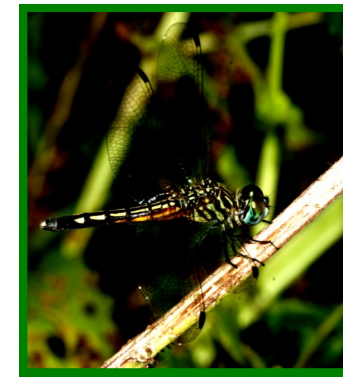


- Found in lakes, ponds and swamps
- Long, narrow abdomen with 3 short tail-like structures at tip.
- Color is brown with some green

Blue Dasher *Pachydiplax longipennis*



Male



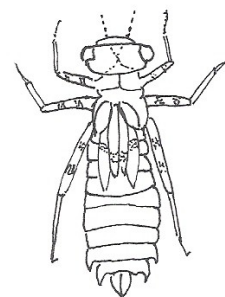
Female

This small blue dragonfly can be seen perched, with its wings lowered, on plants at the edge of ponds, ditches and slow streams. The male Dasher is the only blue dragonfly with a yellow and black striped thorax. Males guard their territory by flying under intruders and pushing them up and away. Females lay their eggs by dipping their abdomen into water. Dashers sometimes migrate along the coast.

Cool fact: Males raise their abdomen in the air to minimize the amount of heat they receive from the sun. This is called obelisking.

Other names: "Swift Long-winged Skimmer" for its swift flight
"Blue Pirate" for its color and attitude

Nymph



- Found in ponds, lakes, marshes, slow streams and even ditches
- Abdomen long but not narrow
- Body is striped with green and brown
- Striped legs

Odonate Behavior



Obelisking



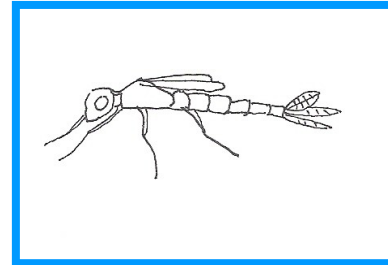
Basking



Wheel Position

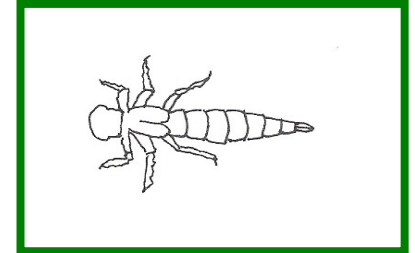
Damselfly or Dragonfly?

Damselfly Nymph



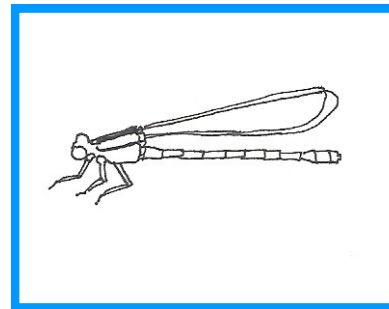
- Long, narrow body
- 3 long, leaf-like structures at tip of abdomen (gills)
- Crawl on bottom

Dragonfly Nymph



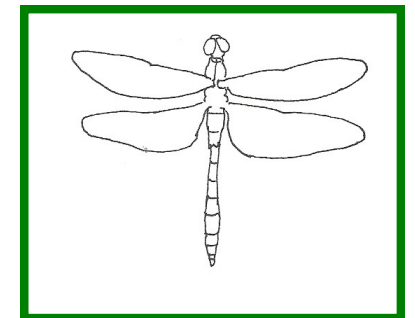
- Some are long; others are wide and short
- Short, pointed structures at tip of abdomen
- Crawl on bottom and propel through the water.

Damselfly Adult



- Weak fliers
- Wings held back over body
- Both sets of wings are the same shape

Dragonfly Adult



- Strong fliers
- Wings held out from the side of the body
- Front wings are a different shape from the back wings